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2 November 1948

General Counsel

Executive Order on Statistical Information to Intergovernmental Organizations

1. At the request of Mr. Crowder of the Bureau of the Budget, I discussed the draft of the Executive Order entitled "Regulations Governing the Providing of Statistical Information to Intergovernmental Organizations" on 1 November.

2. After considerable discussion of the intent of the Order, the type of information involved, and the way in which requests would be handled, it appeared that the Order would have little direct application to CIA. The intent of the Order is to eliminate duplication of requests and preparation of reports among the various Government agencies in possession of statistical information and to prevent the issuance of conflicting reports and, further, to insure that reports rendered to intergovernmental organizations are not in any way in contravention of our national foreign policy.

3. The Bureau of the Budget is responsible for the coordination program and for insuring that the State Department approves of the information as furnished, except in the case of information coming within the Bretton Woods Agreements Act, in which case the Director of the Bureau of the Budget is consulted, but the determinations are made by the National Advisory Council on international, military, and financial problems. The great bulk of the information sought will be statistics concerning the United States economy in general, such as figures on resources, labor, manufacturing, banking matters, and similar facts. Some reports will therefore be obtained from private sources or from reports required by law to be filed with the Government by private sources. Others will be the normal responsibility of one or more Government agencies, such as Commerce, Interior, Labor, or Treasury. Only incidentally, it appears, will information be requested which will involve facts or figures which would come within the field of foreign intelligence information. Thus, it would seem as a practical matter that the connection of CIA with any final reports would be remote.

4. In addition, paragraph 4 of the Order provides that it in no way requires an agency to divulge information which the agency having primary responsibility for security declares must be withheld from the intergovernmental organization in the interest of military security. The phrase "military security" is not, strictly speaking, applicable to all CIA security responsibilities but is probably adequate to protect CIA from having to release any information it does not wish to produce. The phrase "in the interest of security pertaining to the national defense" would be preferable from CIA's point of view but not necessary. The phrase "national security" was objected to by the State Department on the grounds that it would be an inconsistent position for the Executive to take, in view of the fact that this Government is publicly criticizing the Russian Government for failure to supply statistical information to the U.N.

5. After discussion with the Executive Director of the Order and the above background information, it was agreed that there were no grounds for CIA to take exception to the publication of the Order as drafted.

LAWRENCE R. HOUSTON

LRH:mbt

cc: Central Records
Original: 420 Security & Records